CLAIMS

I claim:

1. A PC system comprising:

a plurality of substantially similar input devices coupled to a respective plurality of externally-accessible input ports of a PC; and

a device discovery system that identifies a user-desired input device among the plurality of substantially similar input devices, wherein the identification is carried out by detecting a signal that is generated by the user-desired input device in response to a signal stimulus provided by a user.

2. The PC system of claim 1, further comprising a device configuration system that configures the user-desired input device to operate together with a software application program on the PC.

3. The PC system of claim 2, wherein the software application program is an audio-video communication program that permits the user of the PC to communicate with a second user of a second PC, via an audio-video communication link.

4. The PC system of claim 3, wherein the software program is a video chat program.

5. The PC system of claim 3, wherein the audio-video communication link comprises a digital subscriber line.

6. The PC system of claim 1, wherein the plurality of substantially similar input devices comprises audio input devices, and identifying the user-desired input device comprises the device discovery system unmuting the user-desired input device.

7. The PC system of claim 1, further comprising an output device that is housed together with the user-desired input device in a common enclosure.

8. A PC system comprising:

an audio input device coupled to any one of a plurality of externally-accessible input ports of a PC; and

a device discovery system that polls the plurality of input ports to discover a valid connectivity of the audio input device to the PC by detecting a signal that is generated by the audio input device in response to a user providing an audible stimulus to the audio input device.

9. The PC system of claim 8, further comprising a video input device coupled to any second one of a plurality of externally-accessible input ports of a PC; and wherein the device discovery system polls the plurality of input ports to discover a valid connectivity of the video input device to the PC by detecting a signal that is generated by the video input device in response to a user providing a visual stimulus to the video input device.

10. The PC system of claim 9, wherein the device discovery system unmutes the audio input device to discover the valid connectivity of the audio input device to the PC.

11. A software wizard program stored on a computer-readable medium, the program comprising:

logic configured to provide instructions to a user for selecting an audio input device from a plurality of substantially similar audio input devices that have been communicatively coupled to a first respective plurality of externally-accessible input ports of a PC; and

logic configured to identify the user-selected audio input device by detecting a signal that is generated by the user-selected audio input in response to an audible stimulus that is provided by the user to the user-selected audio input device.

12. The software wizard system of claim 11, further comprising:

logic configured to provide instructions to a user for selecting a video input device from a plurality of substantially similar video input devices that have been communicatively coupled to a second respective plurality of externally-accessible input ports of the PC;

logic configured to provide a dropdown list showing device identification labels for each of the plurality of video input devices; and

logic configured to provide instructions to the user in selecting a video input device from the dropdown list.

13. The software wizard system of claim 12, further comprising:

logic configured to identify the user-selected video input device by detecting a signal that is generated by the user-selected video input in response to a visual stimulus signal that is provided by the user to the user-selected video input device.

14. The software wizard of claim 13, further comprising:

logic configured to provide instructions to the user for selecting an audio output device from a plurality of audio output devices that have been communicatively coupled to a first respective plurality of externally-accessible output ports of a PC;

logic configured to provide a dropdown list showing device identification labels for each of the plurality of audio output devices;

logic configured to provide instructions to the user in selecting the audio output device from the dropdown list; and

logic configured to generate an audible test tone from the selected audio output device.

15. The software wizard of claim 14, further comprising:

logic configured to provide a volume control icon;

logic configured to provide instructions to the user to operate the volume control icon to set a desired volume of the selected audio output device; and

logic configured to generate an audible test tone corresponding to the desired volume, from the selected audio output device.

16. The software wizard of claim 12, wherein the first and second respective plurality of externally-accessible input ports are respectively common ports.

17. A PC system comprising:

logic configured to discover a user-desired input device among a plurality of substantially similar input devices coupled to a respective plurality of externally-accessible input ports of a PC, wherein the discovery is carried out by detecting a signal that is generated by the user-desired input device in response to a signal stimulus provided by a user.

18. The PC system of claim 17, further comprising:

logic configured to link the software driver of the user-desired input device to a software application program on the PC.

19. The PC system of claim 18 wherein the software program is a video chat program.

20. A method of discovering and configuring a user-desired input device among a plurality of substantially similar input devices coupled to a respective plurality of externally-accessible input ports of a PC, the method comprising:

launching a software wizard to provide instructions to a user;

instructing the user to provide a signal stimulus into the user-desired input device;

measuring a first signal amplitude that is generated by a first input device among the plurality of substantially similar input devices;

measuring a second signal amplitude that is generated by the user-desired input device in response to the signal stimulus provided by the user; and

processing the first and second signal amplitudes to identify the user-desired input device.

21. The method of claim 20, wherein the user-desired input device is an user-desired audio input device, and the signal stimulus is an audible signal that is coupled into the user-desired audio input device.

22. The method of claim 20, wherein the user-desired input device is an user-desired video input device, and the signal stimulus is a visual signal that is coupled into the user-desired audio input device.

23. A method of discovering and configuring a user-desired audio output device among a plurality of substantially similar output devices coupled to a respective plurality of externally-accessible output ports of a PC, the method comprising:

launching a software wizard to provide instructions to a user;

instructing the user to select the user-desired audio output device from a dropdown list of the software wizard showing device identification labels for each of the plurality of audio output devices; and

instructing the user to operate a volume control icon of the software wizard to set a desired volume of the user-desired audio output device; and

generating an audible test tone corresponding to the desired volume, from the user-desired audio output device.